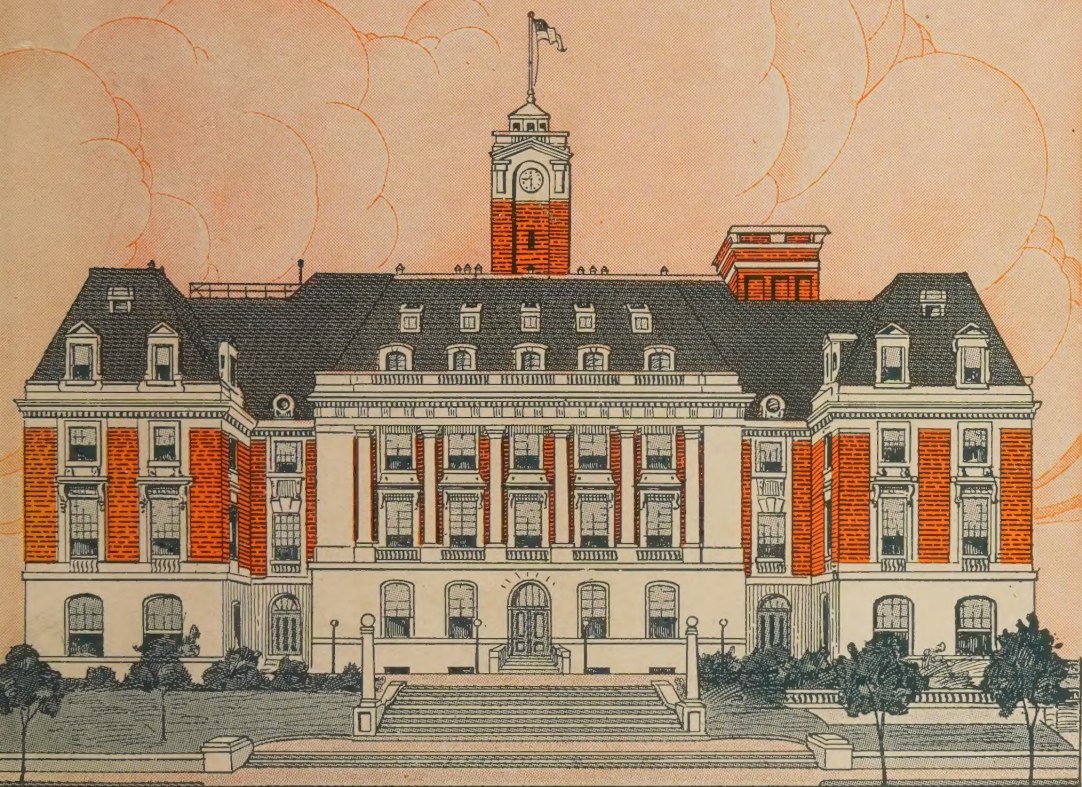


# A Condensed History *of* STATEN ISLAND



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A CONDENSED HISTORY  
OF  
STATEN ISLAND

(Borough of Richmond, New York City)

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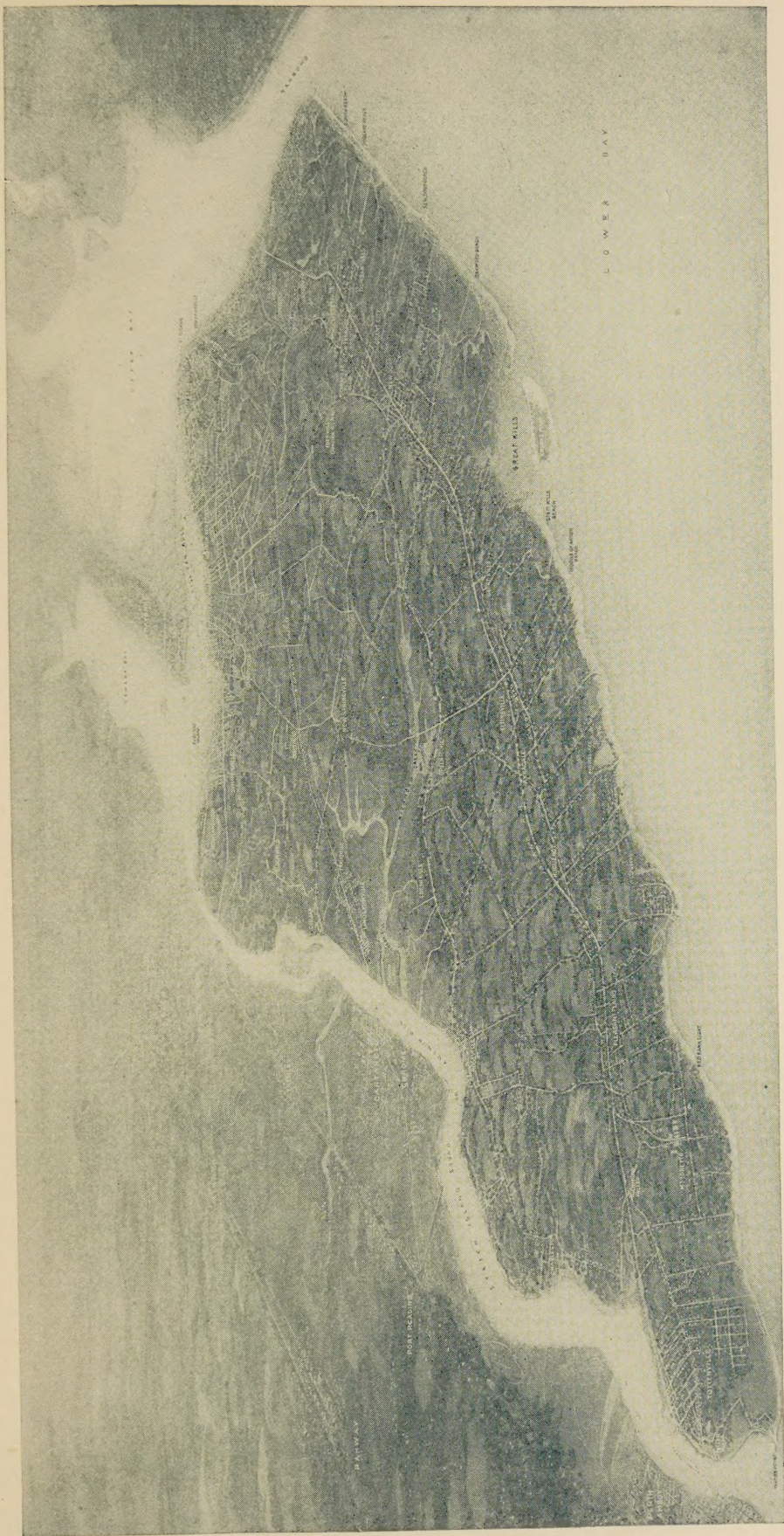
BY  
CHARLES W. LENG  
AND  
EDWARD C. DELAVAN, Jr.

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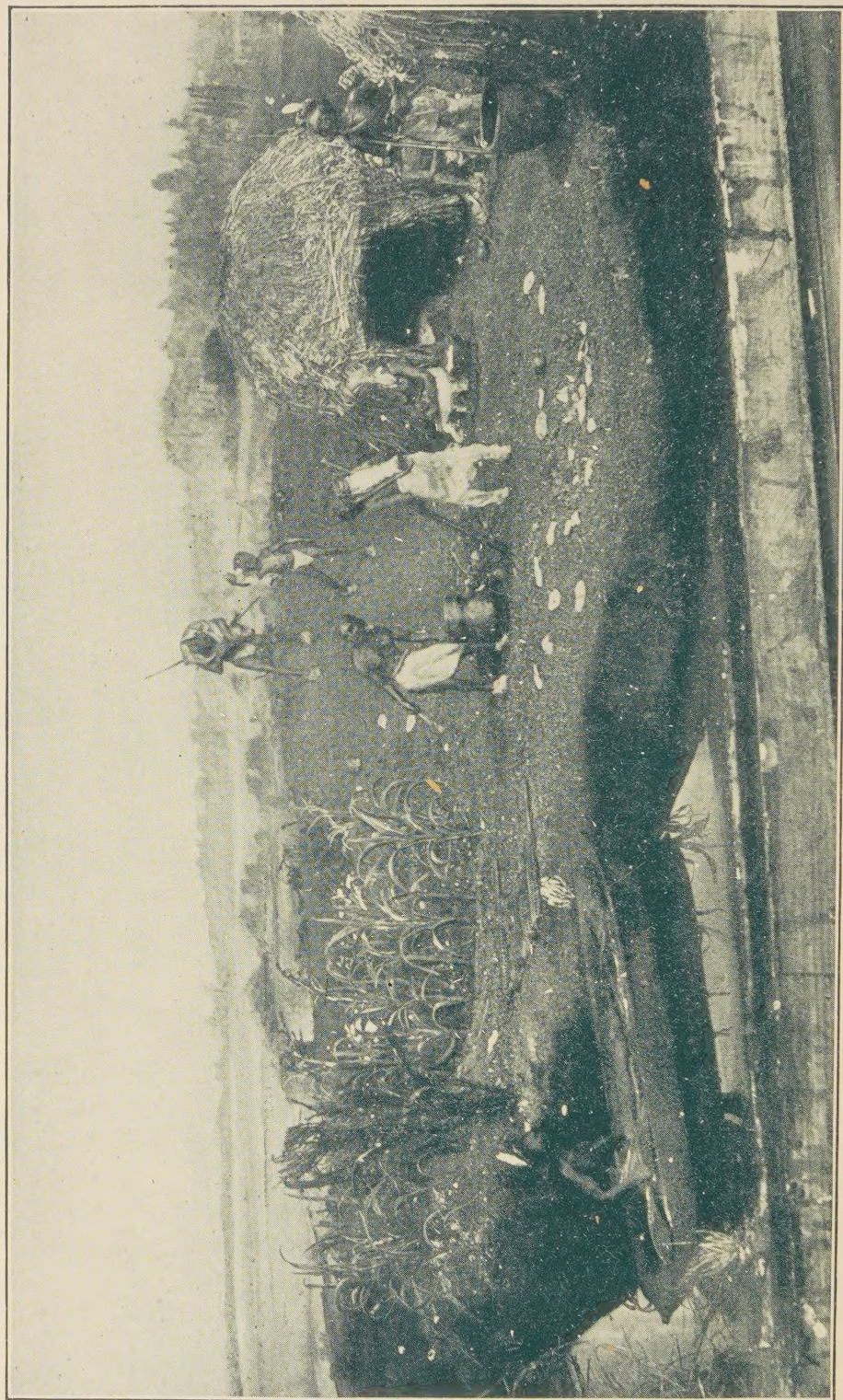
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**BIRDSEYE VIEW OF STATEN ISLAND**  
Borough of Richmond, City of New York.  
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INDIAN LIFE ON STATEN ISLAND

A miniature historical group in the public museum showing Indian Life in 1609 before the arrival of the Dutch.



## A CONDENSED HISTORY OF STATEN ISLAND

By Charles W. Leng and Edward C. Delavan, Jr.



STATEN ISLAND is 13.9 miles long, 7.3 miles across at its widest part, and has 35 miles of waterfront. It contains 57.154 square miles or about 36,600 acres. The earliest description of it reads "an island inhabited by from 80 to 90 savages who support themselves by planting maize". It has now about 126,000 inhabitants of many nationalities, who support themselves by many varied industries. The following pages are intended to tell briefly the events of the three centuries during which its development has reached its present stage. With an area nearly as large as that of Manhattan and Bronx combined, the possibilities of its future development are too great to be foretold.

### *Early History*

The few Indians who lived on Staten Island before its discovery by the Dutch, were of the Lenni-Lenape tribe of the Algonkin nation; few as they were, they, aided by other Indians, retarded its early settlement. They used implements made at best of stone, dressed in the skins of the animals they killed for food, and had few arts beyond the cultivation of corn. The shell fish of the surrounding waters constituted part of their food and also attracted at times other Indians from the mainland. Indian names for Staten Island were Eghquaons (anglicized into Aquehonga) meaning high sandy banks, Monocknong, of doubtful meaning, and Motanucke, meaning land of periwinkles. The western part of Long Island was called Seawanhacky, meaning place of seawan or wampum, the shell beads used for money, and this name may also have been applied to our Island by some Indians who came to it from a distance.

Henry Hudson, an Englishman, in a Dutch boat called the "Half Moon," entered the lower bay on September 3, 1609, searching for a route to the East Indies. He sailed through the Narrows and about 150 miles up the Hudson River. About



a month later he returned to Holland and reported, among other things, the possibility of an extensive trade in furs. The result was that during the next twelve years, many trading voyages were made between Holland and New Netherland, as this part of America was then called, but no permanent settlement immediately resulted. Staaten Eylandt was named in honor of the States General, the governing body of Holland, and it is possible that during these twelve years outgoing ships visited the springs of fresh water then existing near the present Arietta Street, which locality later became known as the Watering Place. In 1621 the Dutch West India Company was chartered in Holland and its directors became for 43 years the governing body of New Netherland. After having built Fort Orange (now Albany) in 1624, they founded New Amsterdam by sending Governor Peter Minuit and several families there in 1626. Manhattan Island was purchased from the Indians and a fort was erected.

Michael Pauw received a grant on August 10, 1630, from the Dutch West India Company which included Staten Island. He made no attempt to improve his opportunity and surrendered his rights in 1637. Three unsuccessful attempts to settle Staten Island followed, each being destroyed by Indians.

Captain David Pietersen De Vries established the first settlement on January 5, 1639. It consisted of a *bouwerie* or small farm near the Watering Place, and was destroyed September 1, 1641. No serious attempt was made to renew it, although De Vries continued to claim the entire island.

The Dutch West India Company granted all Staten Island except the De Vries *bouwerie* to Cornelis Melyn under date of June 19, 1642. Melyn had been in New Netherland three years before and had petitioned the directors in Holland for a grant in 1640. Two farmers, Joris Dircksen and Francis Jansen, who had contracted to work on Staten Island for him, were excused in 1640 because they feared the Indians. After obtaining his grant Melyn brought over people and cattle and started his colony. The Dutch governor made an injudicious attack on the Indians and in revenge they destroyed all but two *bouweries* on Staten Island in 1643.

After seven years, Melyn secured the pecuniary aid of Baron van der Capellan toe Ryssel and renewed the attempt to settle Staten Island, sending about 70 people under the

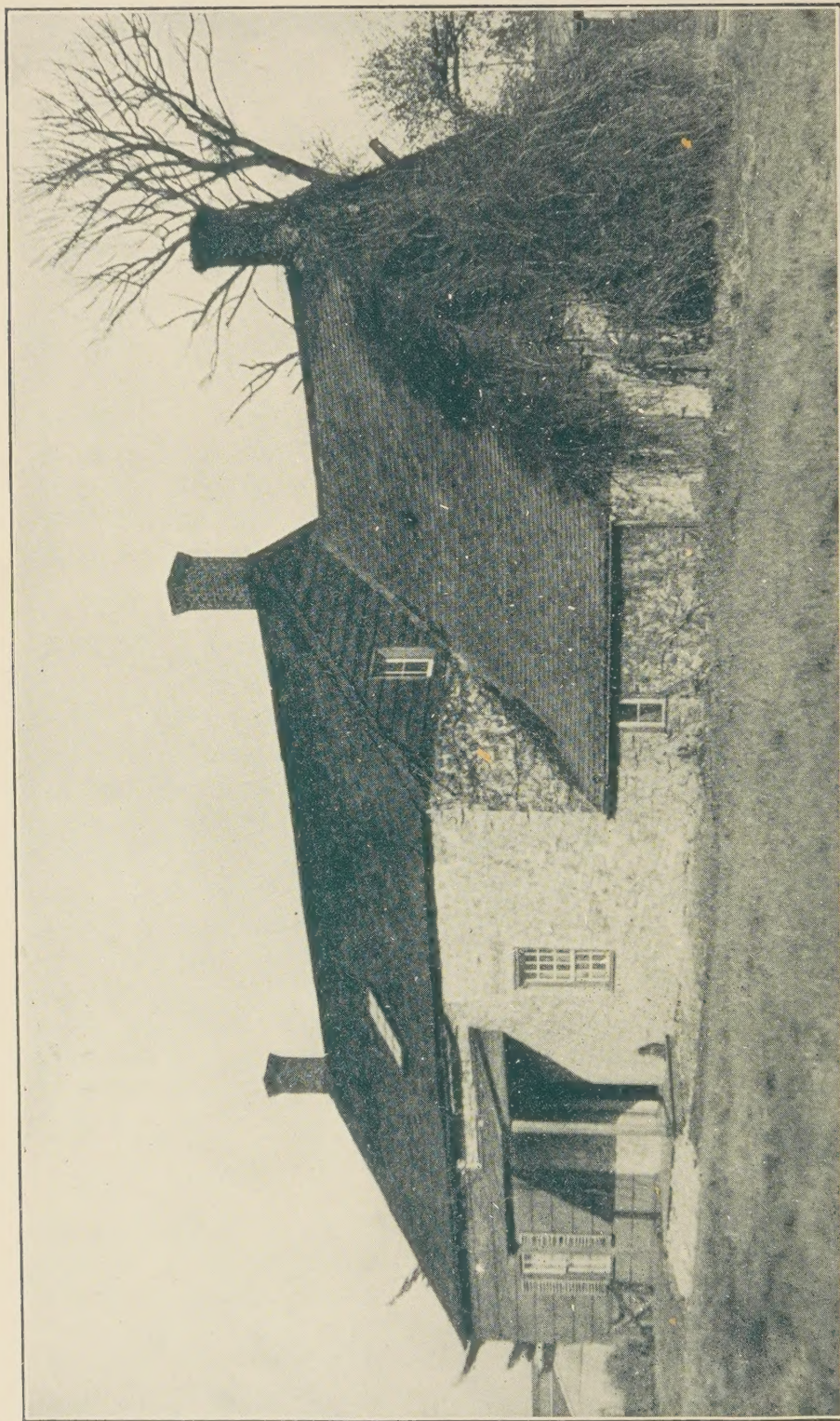


command of Captain Adriaen Post, who arrived December 19, 1650. This attempt survived five years; it included houses, barns, cattle, etc.; the people involved were Dutch. Early in the morning of September 16, 1655, about 500 Indians, angered because a squaw had been shot on Manhattan for stealing a peach, destroyed Post's colony, burned the buildings, turned loose the cattle, and killed or took away as prisoners most of the people. The captives were later ransomed but the colony was not renewed as the governor felt unable to supply sufficient soldiery to protect settlers on Staten Island, of whom he said in 1659 there were only two or three families. The attack by the Indians in 1655 has been called the Peach War; the preceding attacks from similar incidents, the Whiskey and the Pig War; all occurred near the Watering Place. For four years, unsuccessful attempts were made by Melyn to reestablish his colony and finally the Dutch West India Company purchased the interest he and van der Capellan had in the island.

Nineteen settlers, partly French, applied for land on Staten Island on August 22, 1661. Only a few of them actually came; of these Pierre Billiou, Walraven Luten, Hans Christofel and probably Thys Barentsen van Leerdam and others, became permanent settlers and the progenitors of many old families. The settlement was near the present Arrochar. Six soldiers were supplied by the Dutch West India Company to protect it from the Indians and a small block house was built. The Indians continued to be troublesome and Billiou and De Marest were delegates to a conference in 1664, to point out the insufficiency of the protection. The first church record on Staten Island occurs in connection with this French settlement, where in 1663 Reverend Samuel Drisius preached once every two months. The first record of Courts of Justice is January 28, 1664, when Billiou, D'Amarex (De Marest) and Luten were appointed commissaries.

New Amsterdam was surrendered to the English on August 27, 1664. Under Governor Nicolls, some written promises of land on Staten Island were made to Jacques Guyon and others and English names begin to appear. September 7, 1667, Nicholas Stillwell was made constable. February 10, 1668, a tax was levied amounting to £6/14/10½ to help pay for the Gravesend Sessions House. Indian troubles did not immediately disappear, for on May 14, 1669, Pierre





*Photo by P. L. Sperry 1924*

### THE BRITTON COTTAGE

At the corner of New Dorp Lane and Cedar Grove Avenue—Presented to the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1915 by Dr. Nathaniel L. Britton and Mrs. Britton to be preserved as an example of Colonial Architecture. The land on which it stands was granted to Obadiah Holmes in 1677 and deeded to an earlier Nathaniel Britton in 1695.



Billiou and a file of soldiers were ordered by Governor Lovelace to guard property.

Governor Lovelace bought Staten Island from the Indians, taking title by turf and twig as well as by a deed, signed April 13, 1670, a facsimile of which is preserved in the public museum. A barbecue dinner was part of the festivities attending the transfer, which, with other measures, opened the way for settlement by English, French and Dutch, without Indian resistance. A few ground briefs or official grants of land appear to have been issued by the Dutch Governor Stuyvesant, but except for recital in subsequent instruments, all record of them seems to have been lost. No effective grants appear to have been made by the English governor, Nicolls.

### *Growth of English Influence*

Colonel Francis Lovelace, who succeeded Governor Nicolls in the spring of 1668, made but few land grants but important surveys were executed pursuant to his directions; 150 acres were laid out for Captain Dudley Lovelace and adjoining this, lay a tract for which a patent was granted in 1672 to Mr. Andrew Norwood, a land surveyor. Between this and the Kill van Kull lay land in the possession of Mr. Thomas Lovelace while westwardly to Palmers Run lay a territory, a large part of which the Governor probably desired for himself, as he began the erection of a mill at the Run. Eighteen lots were laid out in addition to twenty-two previously surveyed, extending from Old Town to the land now at Oakwood of which Jacques Guyon was in possession; these later became known as the New Lots<sup>1</sup>, of the Old Town or Oude Dorp, established by the Dutch in 1661. Thomas Walton later occupied a lot at the entrance to the Narrows. Andrew Norwood was granted land lying between the east end of Richmond Road and extending nearly to St. John's Church and with a tongue running southwesterly "between the hills." The character of the island that Lovelace was thus developing into an English colony was written by Daniel Denton, an early settler on Long Island in 1670—"most of it very good land, full of timber and produceth all such commodities as Long Island doth.....there is but one town upon it, consisting of English and French, but it is

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(1) A tentative list of the owners of the New Lots includes Isaac Billiou, Walraven Luten, Thomas Stillwell, Hans Christofel, Nathaniel Britton, Dirck Johnson (?), Thomas Walton, Francis Martineau, Lewis Lakeman, George Comins, William Britton, John Dally, John Kingdom, John Watson, Richard Doddiman, Samuel Curtis, Hance Lawrence, Henry Comely, Obadiah Holmes.



capable of entertaining more inhabitants.....there is very great marshes and meddows on both sides of it, excellent good land and good conveniences for the setling of several towns. There grows black walnut and locust as there doth in Virginia, with might tall straight timber". Mr. George W. Tuttle has lately shown that the Town of Dover of certain early English maps was the "one town" of which Denton speaks.

New York was recaptured by the Dutch on August 8, 1673, and remained in their hands for a little more than a year. Pierre Billiou was appointed Schout and Scheppen on Staten Island and exercised his office with more vigor than discretion for, on complaints being made, other Scheppen were added by the Dutch Governor, and after the resumption of British rule, he was in court for taking two guns from Thomas Walton, which he had to restore. Billiou had several daughters, whose intermarriages allied him with the English, French and Dutch elements. He continued to live on Staten Island for many years and his descendants, Pralls, Brittons, Stillwells, Larzaleres (Le Resilier) are prominent in the history of the island.

The loss of New York to the Dutch resulted in the financial ruin of Governor Lovelace, who returned to England; his brother Dudley, was expelled from the province, but his other brother Thomas, was permitted to remain.

A few grants were made by the Dutch Governor Colve, but these seem to have been disregarded.

New Amsterdam was surrendered by the Dutch to the English Governor, Sir Edmond Andros, on November 10, 1674, following the peace of Westminster, and a new grant from Charles II to James, Duke of York, bearing date of June 29, 1674, was made. The surveying of the island and the granting of the land to settlers, generally in lots of 80 acres or multiples thereof, was resumed. From 1675 to 1677 many surveys were made. Governor Andros proceeded at once to sequesterate the estate of Colonel Francis Lovelace. His first grant was made to Captain Nathaniel Davenport and Company, of land on the north side, October 1, 1675. In the following June, a patent was granted to Mr. John Palmer for about 80 acres on the north side, whereon stood the incompleated Lovelace mill. About 100 patents had been granted



by 1679 and Andros wrote in 1675 "nor is there nor hath been for some years one Indyan belonging to Staten Island". Most of the island, however, was woodland with settlers' lots generally in groups scattered over the four quarters of the island with wide intervening spaces. A grant of 1676<sup>2</sup> to Andrew Norwood included his original grant and the adjoining land of Captain Dudley Lovelace. A third and a very indefinite grant to Norwood in 1677 later resulted in controversy. We fortunately have a description of the island in 1679 in the journal of Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter who walked across it October 11, 12 and 13 of that year, after going in a hired rowboat from New York to Brooklyn, thence after a night's rest, to the Watering Place. On the first day, they walked along the east shore, finding only one house, and then around what is now Fort Wadsworth to what they called Oude Dorp (Arrochar) where they found seven old houses of which only three were inhabited and so by a tolerably good road, which ran continually in the woods so they got astray, to Nieuwe Dorp, where they spent the first night. On the 12th they walked nearly to the west point where an Englishman<sup>3</sup> lived; it was all woods and they had to go along the beach. Turning northward they had to go far to get across the Fresh Kill; they lost their way repeatedly in the woods, going from one plantation to another, very hot and pestered with mosquitos. They spent the night at the plantation of a Frenchman. They mention by name Le Chaudronnier and Pierre Le Gardinier, supposed by Mr. Riker to have been Jean Belleville and Pierre Cresson, early French settlers, both of whom had received grants of land. On the 13th, they finished their walk to the north shore and crossed the Achter Kol in a canoe to New Jersey. The uninhabited woods in the hilly parts were used for pasturing horses and cattle; the creeks for fishing and catching oysters. Game of all kinds was plentiful, twenty-five and thirty deer were sometimes seen in a herd. They tasted the best grapes. They estimated the population at a hundred families, English, Dutch and French, some of whom were Walloons, living rather far from each other, with neither church nor minister. The government of Staten Island at this time before it had become the County of Richmond, comprised Richard Stillwell, Justice,

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(2) A map of Staten Island dated 1670 but showing 1676 items has the following place names, viz., Shooters Island, Seal Banks, (Robben's Reef), Palmers, Lovelace, Norwood, Waltons, Old Town, New Dorp and Billops.

(3) Christopher Billop had a grant of 1300 acres at what is now Tottenville in 1676.



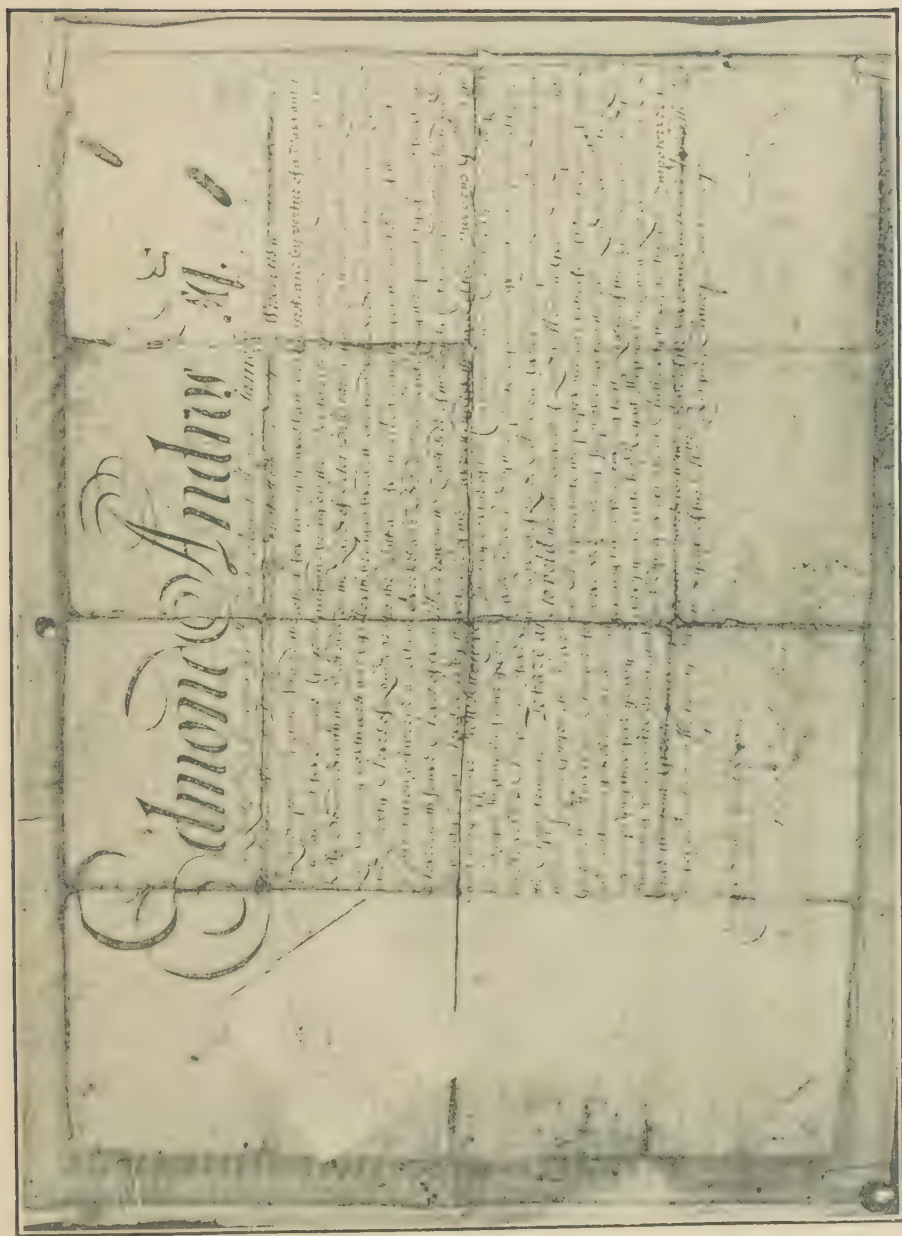
Obadiah Holmes, Clerk, Cornelius Corson, Constable, and five overseers. A court was held and some of its proceedings were entered in the oldest volume in the office of the county clerk and have been printed in Stillwell's Historical and Genealogical Miscellany. Among the items are disputes about unruly horses breaking insufficient fences, swine being killed by dogs, marking four small pigs from a strange sow, borrowing a fish net and returning it in a "damnified" condition, "pees cods and ingon corn", traded for 26 pounds of butter. The public charges for the year 1681 amounted to £24 including rewards for killing wolves and a "tigger". Each 80 acre lot was assessed 4/6. The names of many original settlers are disclosed by the record of their cattle marks; and the picture presented is one of an agricultural community in an early stage of its development, comprising many French and Dutch people, but rapidly becoming English in its government and sentiment.

In 1680 a large number of land grants were made and in reduced number, though not in size, they continued to be made for a long time. Governor Andros was succeeded by Governor Thomas Dongan, who in May 1684 granted to John Palmer some 4500 acres, besides confirming sundry parcels conveyed to him by others. On January 17, 1687, there was filed a description of a survey of 5100 acres on the Kill van Kull. A grant of all this land was established as "The Lordshippe or mannor of Cassiltowne", all of which on April 16, 1687, Palmer conveyed to Governor Thomas Dongan. In October, 1708, a grant was made by Queen Anne, who had ascended the throne in 1702, and had appointed her cousin, Edward Hyde, viscount Cornbury, as Governor of the Province of New York, of "all vacant and unappropriated land on Staten Island" to Captain Lancaster Symes, for which land his successors have been looking ever since. By deed dated July 20, 1711, Symes and his associates<sup>4</sup> conveyed to trustees "for the use of the Church of England as by law established on Staten Island" several parcels of land including some 26 acres lying on the east side of New Dorp Lane, which they claimed under their grant of 1708, because included in a larger tract which in 1685 had been provisionally laid out "for the use of an English school or minister." But in 1691, this last mentioned land had been granted by patent to William

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(4) Adolph Philipse, Peter Fauconnier and Ebenezer Wilson.





LAND GRANT OF 1675

The original parchment granting land at Oakwood to Jacques Guyon and signed by Governor Edmond Andros, is preserved in the public museum.



Britton who was in possession and so remained until he sold the property in 1719.

Cornbury's administration has been described as rapacious and disgraceful; it is said that he was accustomed to disport himself on the Battery attired in women's apparel; a portrait showing him so arrayed still hangs in Kensington Museum. It was perhaps fortunate for Staten Island that its land grants had been principally made before his time.

### *Duxbury Glebe*

In March 1687 there was filed a description of a survey of 340 acres of land, lying upon the east end of the island, bounded on the north by the Kill van Kull, laid out for Thomas Lovelace. Lovelace died; his niece Mary married Ellis Duxbury, county judge on Staten Island from 1691 to 1710, and to them a patent was granted which must have been unsatisfactory to the patentees, saving, as it did, the rights of any nearer heirs than the niece Mary. A new patent was made to Ellis and Mary Duxbury in 1708. In 1718 Duxbury having survived his wife, died leaving a will by which he devised his land to the corporation of the Minister, Church Wardens and Vestry of St. Andrew in the County of Richmond for the only use and maintenance of the Reverend Aeneas Mackenzie and his successors. This land was thereafter known as The Glebe.

### *A Century of British Rule 1683-1783*

The County of Richmond, one of the original counties in the province of New York, was erected on November 1, 1683; its name was derived from the town and dukedom of Richmond in Yorkshire, England; Liber B of Deeds begins March 1, 1684. For a hundred years it remained English, devoted to agriculture and slowly increasing in population and wealth as evidenced by the increasing percentage of negro slaves. In 1698, these comprised 10% of a population of 727, and in 1771, 21% of a population of 2847. Even after the Revolution in 1791, 939 slaves were included in a population of 4274. There are few events to record in this long period until the Revolution, except the increasing conveniences. In 1690 the sympathy of Governor Dongan with the Stuart cause in England and his being a Catholic, is said to have caused some panic on Staten Island and the Leisler administration in New York had some sympathizers here





*Photo by P. L. Sperr 1924*

### **CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW**

**At Richmond**—The original church was built 1709-1712; part of the original walls remain—The church was enlarged in 1743 and again in 1770. It was damaged by fire in 1867 and 1872.



which led to the Sheriff's report of several riots and tumults in 1691. The wars between England and France were felt on Staten Island, for in 1746, New York raised 1600 men and Nathaniel Britton's will declares his intention of going to the war in "Kenedy". In 1765 the war in Canada led to Amherst's regiment being encamped on Staten Island and the plundering by the soldiers of some of the farms. But there is little else to tell that was adverse. Among the beneficial results of British government were road making, commencing as early as 1694, and the erection of public buildings. Road commissioners were appointed in 1704 and thereafter numerous entries in the old volume previously mentioned show their activities. The roads at first frequently passed through the farms by swinging gates instead of by them and were planned for convenience in passing to the landings or to the mills and churches. They were dirt roads, the greater road four rods and the lesser three rods wide, and were found very faulty by the British engineers at the beginning of the Revolution. The Taylor and Skinner map of 1781 shows their location. A prison was built at "Cuckols Towne" (now Richmond) in 1710 and rebuilt in 1768, also a court house in 1729. The records of the Court of Sessions show that it was held at Stony Brook (near present New Dorp) from 1718. A second court house was built at Richmond in 1792 (this building, now a private house, remains) and the third used until recently, in 1837. The court house at St. George was ready for occupancy June 1921. The ferries, beginning probably in the 17th century without official license, soon received government attention—Dove and Belue had a license for a ferry from Sand Bay (now Clifton) to Long Island in 1713; Anthony Wright had one for a ferry from Smoaking Point (now Rossville) to New Jersey in 1722; Thomas Stillwell had permission to run from Yellow Hook (near Bay Ridge) to the east shore of Staten Island in 1740. The ferry to Amboy and that to Bergen Point were equally early in operation although no license record has been found. Licenses for ferries to New York come later, Solomon Comes from the north shore in 1747 and Watson's from the east shore in 1755 being the first. The route of travel was ordinarily across the Narrows, and across the Arthur Kill; it involved the transportation of the traveler's horse as well as himself. The following extract from a journal kept in 1716 by Reverend James Fontaine describes his journey from Long Island—"with much difficulty crossed to Staten Island when we mounted our

horses and came to one Stuart's, an inn on the road about seven miles from the ferry, where we supped and lay all night. Sunday at seven in the morning we set out from Stuart's and at twelve of the clock we came.....where the ferry is kept and we got ferried over to Amboy. 'The wind blew so hard we could not get our Horses ferried over'. Other governmental functions in British days, were the providing in 1720, of public pounds for stray animals, one near the Burying Place (Port Richmond) the other at Smoaking Point (Rossville) and the licensing of retailers of strong liquors of whom in 1717 there were thirteen. The inns were places where meetings for public purposes were held and had names, some of which like Blazing Star, Morning Star, Rose and Crown, Black Horse, Sine of the Ship, are still remembered. The annual cost of county government ranged according to Clute's Annals from \$142. to \$1382., probably including only part of the total cost.

The development of the Church of England was encouraged by legislation in 1693, which provided a salary of £40 a year for the minister. It was also aided after 1702 by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which paid £50 a year to its missionary on Staten Island. Reverend Aeneas Mackenzie, who came here in 1705, was successful in procuring the building of the Church of St. Andrew 1709-1712, the building of a rectory, and the bequest in 1718 of the Duxbury Glebe, comprising much of the present St. George, New Brighton and Tompkinsville. The church was enlarged in 1743 and again in 1770. Churches of other denominations were not so fortunate. The French Congregation, which in 1695 was the only church on the Island, united with the Dutch in a call to a Dutch minister in 1717 and by 1733 had become absorbed in the Church of St. Andrew, except as to some elderly people who spoke French only. The Dutch Congregation had a voorlezer's house in Richmond in 1699, after having had the services of Reverend Petrus Tesschenmacher from 1683 to 1686; they built a hexagonal church at Port Richmond in 1716. This church was burned during the Revolution, rebuilt in 1787 and again in 1846. Dating its beginning from the preaching of Drisius in 1663, the Dutch Reformed Church is the oldest on Staten Island. Its baptismal records go back to 1696 and up to 1751 are in the Dutch language. The Dutch had also a church at Richmond; it was burned during the Revolution and re-



built in 1808. Other early church organizations were the Presbyterian Society which received a deed for land at Stony Brook in 1729, and the Moravians, who after preliminary preaching in 1742, built a church in 1763. It has been claimed that the Methodist Church dates from 1771 but official records indicate its organization in 1784 and the building of Woodrow Church in 1787. Education, while not entirely neglected, was not forward in development. Mackenzie procured salaries for two schoolmasters from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1707 and such support was continued to the Revolution. Many people who gave deeds, etc., however, could not sign their names and had to execute such papers by making their mark. This condition was not uncommon at the period and Clute in his *Annals of Staten Island*, dwells more on the cold winters of 1740, 1761 and 1768 and the prevalence of smallpox than he does on the lack of schools. His pages on domestic life in the 18th century are well worth reading. He describes the long, low stone houses, the kitchen with its spacious fireplace, the kindly treated slaves, sharing on winter evenings the apples, nuts and cider. The home-made shingles, the hand-made nails, the spinning wheels for wool and flax, the looms, the candle moulds and warming pans are still preserved in museums; but the fattened swine, the well-fed beef, the smokehouse hung with hams and shoulders of which he speaks, are as completely gone as are the visits to the beach to procure oysters, shad and other fish, or those to the woods for the game that abounded in the forests.

Industrial development, outside of farming, was distinctly discouraged under British rule. On Staten Island it was confined to saw and grist mills, sometimes operated by tidal water, a few stores, blacksmith's shops, weavers, basket makers and itinerant tailors. There was no village life; large areas were held by the Dongans in Castleton, by the Billops in Westfield, who visited with the wealthy British in Manhattan. The Duxbury Glebe was leased as a farm. British control in 1774 was well nigh complete on Staten Island. The names of many of the people, however, still showed their French and Dutch origin; there was preaching in Dutch as late as 1757, and to this day Dutch place names survive—examples are Kill van Kull, Robben's Reef, Princes Bay (named for the Prince of Orange), Holland Hook, New Dorp, The Clove (cleft or cut between hills).



*Photo by P. L. Sperr 1924*

### **THE CHRISTOPHER HOUSE**

**On the Willow Brook Road, formerly called Gunfactory Road—Built about 1750 and traditionally the meeting place of patriotic Staten Islanders during the Revolution.**



*The Revolution 1774-1783*

As a result of the strong British influence on Staten Island its prevailing sentiment, even after the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, was a desire for reconciliation with Great Britain. In the first Provincial Congress we had five representatives. In December 1775, Paul Mischeau wrote that the vote was against sending representatives to the second Congress, and it was only after such action had been censured by the Congress that representatives were sent in April 1776. The Continental Congress sent Colonel Herd and his regiment here to hold Staten Island if possible and from the heights above the Watering Place his troops fired upon the British ships. Early in July 9000 British troops arrived, to be soon followed by 20,000 more. Staten Island became a vast British camp; the officers were quartered in the taverns or in the best private houses, the men in huts; earthworks were constructed, roads improved, and levies made on the farmers for wood, for fuel, hay and straw for horses, cattle for food. Resistance was impossible and many patriotic Staten Islanders retired to New Jersey.

After the defeat of Washington at the Battle of Long Island in August, 1776, for which a great part of the troops were withdrawn from Staten Island, the hope of reconciliation was renewed. A conference was arranged on September 11, 1776, in the Billop House between Franklin, Adams and Rutledge, representing the Continental Congress, and Admiral Lord Richard Howe, attended by his Secretary, Henry Strachey. The Admiral offered his services in obtaining forgiveness for repentant rebels; Franklin offered to make terms of peace, provided England would recognize our independence. Nothing came of it except the celebrity thenceforth of the Billop house.

The remaining incidents of the Revolution were partially successful attacks by American troops upon the British and the secret service maintained by patriotic Staten Islanders. There were two skirmishes near Richmond in which the Church of St. Andrew was damaged; there was an attack upon the fort, at what is now Fort Hill Park. New Brighton; a sharp skirmish at what is now Port Richmond, in which the Dutch church was burned. Later there were attacks by water on the south shore. The British were kept so uneasy that many preferred to live in New York, including the Reverend Sam. Seabury, rector of St. Andrew. The secret service per-

formed by John Mersereau, of Woodbridge, New Jersey, to whom Washington paid \$3276. in 1780, was based upon information of British plans gathered by patriotic Staten Islanders. The patriotism of the Mersereau family is shown also by the action of the Provincial Congress in carrying the name of Joshua Mersereau throughout the war as our representative by appointment of the Congress, for an election here was impossible. Traditionally, the Christopher House on the Willow Brook Road was the patriotic headquarters, Joseph Christopher being a member of the Committee of Safety. Abram Cole has also been honored for his patriotism by the Daughters of the American Revolution who have named a Chapter for him.

The functions of civil government were to a great extent suspended during the Revolution. The most eloquent page in Liber E of Deeds is nearly blank. It indicates that not a single deed was recorded in Richmond County throughout the whole period of the Revolution. Some few mortgages found their way upon record during this time, raising some inference that the British confiscated the libers of deeds, but that the libers of mortgages, or one of them, may have remained in the hands of Paul Micheau, who was county clerk from 1761 to 1784 and county judge from 1786 to 1797.

The demoralization is shown also in the paucity of church records, for even at St. Andrew under British protection only a few baptisms were entered. In spite of efforts to preserve the good will of the people by paying them well for their wood and produce, there were many instances of oppression and robbery, even of murder. The British soldiers were responsible for some outrages, unscrupulous natives taking advantage of the disordered times for others. There was much destruction of property; the forests were cut freely for fuel and the present absence of trees of great size is one of the results of the Revolution.

The end came ten days after the evacuation of New York City, when the last of the British troops on Staten Island embarked on December 5, 1783. Thereafter, Staten Island was part of the State of New York.

### *Staten Island Never a Part of New Jersey*

As romantic but unfounded legends purporting to describe the separation of Staten Island from New Jersey have



often been printed, it is proper to state that it was part of the Dutch possessions which passed into the possession of the Duke of York. It was definitely purchased from the Indians by Colonel Francis Lovelace, Governor of the province in 1670. Because a subsidiary grant to the proprietors of East Jersey was bounded on the east by the Hudson River, they set up a claim to the Island on the ground that the mouth of the river was at the Narrows. They were never in possession and their claim was never recognized by the Duke of York or his successors. Throughout the British period Staten Island was part of New York. The final adjustment of the boundary between the States of New York and New Jersey was made by Boundary Commissions after the Revolution, the details of which are given in The State Law, Laws of 1892, Chapter 678, Section 7, p. 1510 et seq.

### *Staten Island's Return to Farming and Fishing 1783-1811*

For thirty years after the Revolution, Staten Island was content to return to its former occupations as a rural community devoted principally to farming and fishing, but with freedom to establish other industries of which some advantage was taken. The punishment of Billop and Seaman, regarded as offensive royalists, by forfeiture of their lands in 1784, was one of the first events. Angry feelings did not immediately disappear and at the first court of sessions in 1784, an attempt was made to indict a man whose remarks had been uncomplimentary about rebels. Some loyalists left Staten Island for the British provinces in Canada. But the principal concern of our people was the restoration of what had been destroyed and the advancement of new projects.

The court house at Richmond was replaced at a cost of \$1000 in 1792; public stocks were added in 1801 and the first poorhouse with two acres of land between Richmond and New Dorp was bought in 1803. The present location of the City Farm Colony dates from 1829. Land for the fort at the Narrows was sold to the State of New York in 1794 and to the United States in 1847.

A flour mill at what is now West New Brighton dock, fed by the water of the Clove Valley Brook (carried through a canal which can still be traced in part) was built before 1800. A tannery at the head of Burger Avenue utilized another stream of water.

The churches were active in building projects. The

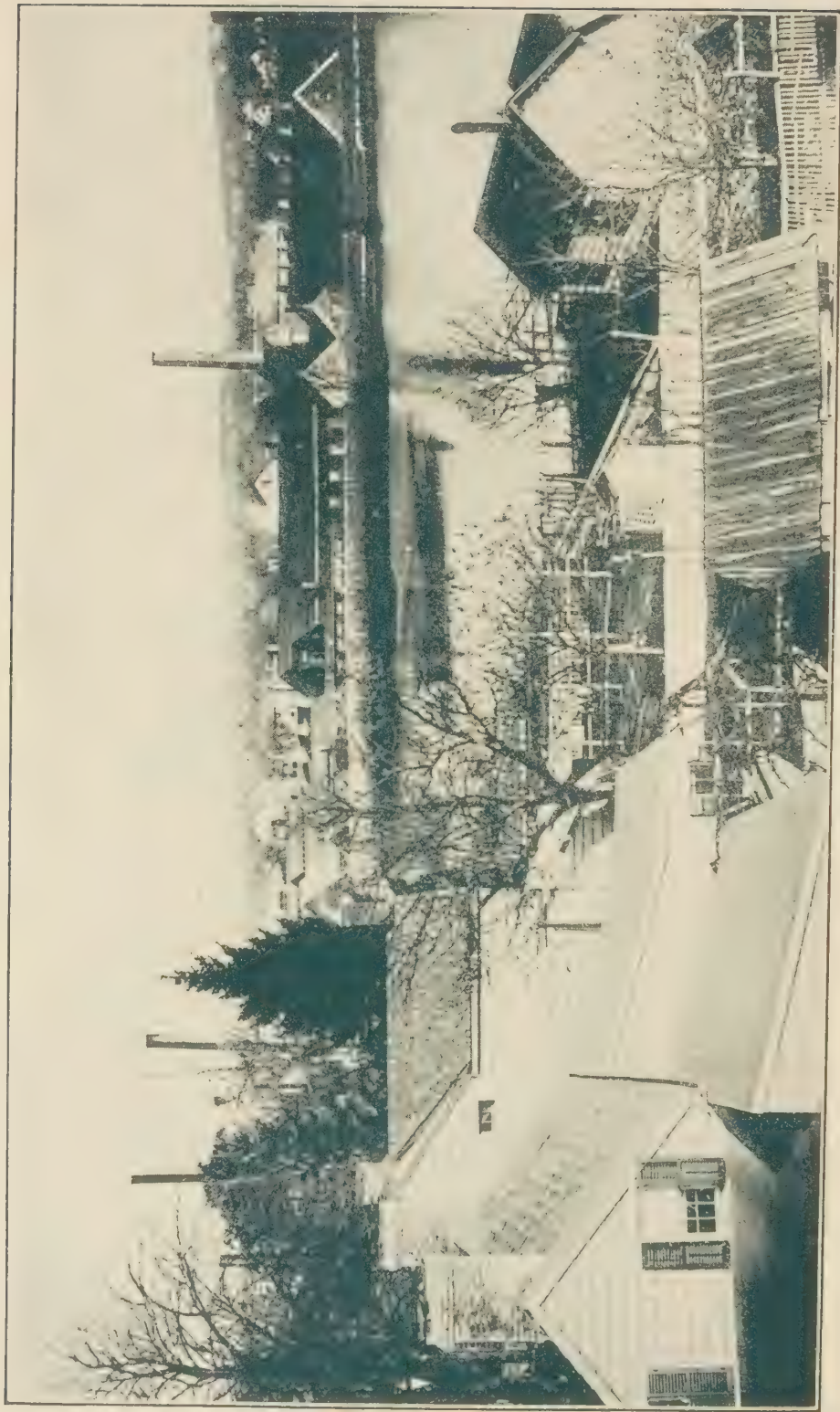
Baptist Church was organized in 1785 and its Clove Meeting House was built in 1809. The Woodrow Methodist Church was built in 1787, and the Asbury Church at New Springville in 1802. The Dutch Church at Port Richmond was rebuilt in 1787 and the church at Richmond was rebuilt in 1808. Trinity Chapel (now Church of the Ascension), was built in 1801; the building then erected is now used as a Parish House.

Transportation was still confined to sloops or periaguas, the latter being flat-bottomed boats, with high guards, propelled by sails and with two masts, carrying horses, cattle, swine, farm produce, etc., as well as people. In high winds they were liable to upset with danger of drowning. A memoir of Reverend R. C. Moore tells of an incident in 1793 when a periagua loaded with eleven oxen, two women and eight men was thus upset and only the men and one woman were rescued by the Van Duzer periagua on which the clergyman and his wife were passengers. In the cemetery at New Springville a gravestone records the drowning on June 16, 1812, of a 19-year old mother and her infant child by the upsetting of a ferry boat. There are many other instances. For the same year, we read of Captain Cornelius Vanderbilt, then 18 years old, as commander of the "Dread", the largest and fastest periagua in the bay.

During these thirty years, slavery was gradually disappearing on Staten Island. By a law passed in 1798 no child could thereafter be born into slavery, but the owner of the child's parents, if he supported it in infancy, could have its services for a period of about 25 years. Many owners set the child free at birth and by 1825 there were no slaves on Staten Island.

In education, while no great progress was made, the beginning came with the establishment in 1784 of the University of the State of New York with three Staten Islanders, Abraham Bancker, John C. Dongan and Harmanus Garrison among its first members. It is under the authority of this body that Regent's examinations are held and degrees granted. The development of the island during this period was principally the work of native Staten Islanders and such also were the public officials. Names like Micheau, Mersereau, Corson, etc., occur repeatedly. The large estates became more or less subdivided. The great Dongan tract, for instance, passed to





#### THE FACTORY POND

This pond supplied the Dye Works, established in 1819 at Factoryville, with water. The photograph was made in 1886 by C. W. Hunt; the pond has been dry for nearly 25 years.

Walter Dongan, nephew of Sir Thomas Dongan, and through Walter's son, Thomas, to Walter's grandson, John Charlton Dongan, who sold the last of the land to his brother-in-law, John McVickar in 1794. The Duxbury Glebe began to be divided in 1799 when 30 acres were taken by the State of New York for a lazaretto or quarantine station for patients suffering from yellow fever and other contagious diseases. Out of this tract, five acres were conveyed to the United States and are still used by the Lighthouse Department. The oldest map in the County Clerk's office (No. 1) contains a survey of this 30 acres. After 50 years the removal of the quarantine was officially recommended but was not performed until the citizens removed the patients and burned the buildings, September 1 and 2, 1858. John C. Thompson and Ray Tompkins were tried for arson but acquitted to the satisfaction of the community. New buildings were erected at Seguine's Point; they also were burned within two years and the hospitals were then moved to Hoffman and Swinburne Islands.

The growth of the population was slow during these first thirty years of the Republic; it increased by only 1600 while Brooklyn gained 3800 and Manhattan 63000. But it was a period of preparation for the village and industrial development of the next 45 years.

#### *Development of Villages and Factories 1814-1860*

Daniel D. Tompkins, born in 1774, had been a member of the State legislature, a member of Congress, a judge and governor of the State before his attention was drawn to Staten Island while rebuilding the fortifications at the Narrows during the War of 1812. He had early acquired an interest in the steamboat monopoly of Robert Fulton. He began extensive purchases of land by buying part of the Duxbury Glebe and ultimately owned about 700 acres of it and other lands. He founded the village of Tompkinsville with its quaintly named streets, Arietta, Griffen, Minthorne, Hannah and Sarah Ann, commemorating his children. Through his efforts the Richmond Turnpike Company was incorporated in 1815 and a year later constructed a continuous road from Tompkinsville to the New Blazing Star Ferry, now Linoleumville. In conjunction with his steamboat "Nautilus" which began to run November 29, 1817, Staten Island thus became the route of travel between New York and Philadelphia. He supported Reverend Peter I. Van Pelt in establishing the Dutch Reformed Church at Tompkinsville, built a mansion for him-



self on Fort Place and another on St. Marks Place called the Marble House for his daughter, which later became St. Marks Hotel. He was Vice-President of the United States, 1817-1825, and as such entertained Lafayette on Staten Island August 15, 1824. He made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors in 1821; his last years were unfortunately clouded by pecuniary embarrassments and melancholy. He died June 11, 1825, aged 51, after having given a remarkable impetus to the development of Staten Island. His funeral procession passed from the Whitehall Slip to St. Marks in the Bowery. His property at foreclosure sales passed in part to his children, in part to Caleb T. Ward, the father of Albert Ward of Ward's Hill.

Factoryville, now West New Brighton, received its impetus when the mill property there was bought by Barrett, Tileston & Company in 1819. It was then owned by Van Buskirk and included a wharf, pond and a canal (which can still be traced) bringing water from the Clove Valley Brook. The Dyeing and Printing establishment then founded is still in operation. It brought many New England families to the Island, notably the Heals, and led to other industries on the north shore besides building up the village by the workmen it employed. The factory pond, now dried, and the buckram field were features of old Factoryville that are barely remembered.

About 1829 the gathering of oysters at Mariners Harbor, Tottenville, etc., in small skiffs began to develop into an extensive trade that by 1846 was using sloops and schooners. The trade continued to grow and by 1886 fleets of catboats, sloops, schooners and dredging steamers were bringing oysters from Long Island and Virginia to be refreshed by the waters of the Passaic and Raritan Rivers sweeping past our shores. Lines of scows at the foot of West 10th Street, New York furnished a wholesale market. With the pollution of the water this industry ceased to be important on Staten Island, but the imposing homes of those it enriched may still be seen at Mariners Harbor and the memory of roads white with oyster shells remains with the older generation.

Minthorne Tompkins, in association with William J. Staples, bought from Cornelius Vanderbilt (later known as the Commodore) and his brothers and sisters, part of the Cornelius Corsen patent in 1833. Map No. 8 in the County Clerk's office shows the extent of the purchase. The name

of Stapleton was given to the development. In the same year the Sailor's Snug Harbor<sup>5</sup> became established on the land now occupied which had been bought in 1831. The Seaman's Retreat also dates from this year.

Thomas E. Davis began his extensive purchases in 1834; he formed the New Brighton Association whose project is shown on Map 12 in the County Clerk's office and in a rare pamphlet in the Public Museum. Many of the present streets in New Brighton, the Pavilion Hotel, etc., were planned and a fashionable resort, long popular, was created. The village of Richmond was laid out by Henry I. Seaman in 1836. The Staten Island Association, in which a number of people were interested, laid out Clifton in 1837 as shown on Map No. 22. The panic of 1837 was detrimental to this and previous similar enterprises.

The Burying Place, near the foot of Richmond Avenue existed before the 18th Century. The village of Port Richmond has grown up around it and the ferry to Bergen Point. In 1838 it received a special impetus from the establishment of the Staten Island Whaling Company which operated a bark called the "White Oak" and a factory making oil. The factory was burned and the Jewett White Lead Works built on its site in 1842. David Mersereau of Mersereau's Ferry, Newton Flour Mill and other enterprises and Richard D. Littell, whose bank, though unsuccessful, was early, are not to be forgotten. Some of the industries which became established in these villages and helped to build them up are noticed below. Through them and the farming industries, which continued and profited by the growth of villages, the population had increased by 1860 to 25,000. This gain was also in part due to foreign immigration.

### *Transportation*

The steam ferryboat "Nautilus" made her first trip to Staten Island on November 29, 1817, and inaugurated an

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(5) Captain Robert Richard Randall bought in 1790 twenty-one acres of good farming land on Manhattan for £5000. In 1801 he devised it with his mansion house for the founding of the Sailor's Snug Harbor. It was his intention that the Snug Harbor should be built upon this property and the farm would supply all the grain and vegetables which the inmates would require. The trustees, however, perceived that farming was not the most profitable use to which the property could be put. The mansion stood at Broadway and Tenth Street; the land extended from the Bowery to Fifth Avenue. While suits to break the will were in progress, an act of the Legislature enabled the trustees in 1828 to lease the property and purchase the present site on Staten Island. At the time of Captain Randall's death the income was about \$4,000; by 1848 it had increased to nearly \$40,000.; by 1898 it was about \$400,000., and is still mounting. The land bought on Staten Island had been granted by patent to Claas Arentse Veghte in 1677 except small pieces obtained later. It has a frontage on the Kill van Kull of 2200 feet and consisted of an area of 172 acres. The massive buildings and well kept grounds make it an ornament to Staten Island, as well as a Snug Harbor for about 1,000 disabled sailors. The only qualification they need is five years' service under the American Flag.



improvement in transportation, which was an important factor in the developments above recorded. The "Bolivar" was soon added and the Bolivar and Nautilus ferry to the east shore established. In 1823, the "Atlanta" commenced running from the north shore; in 1833 the "Cinderella" and "Water Witch" were running from New York to Mersereau's Ferry (Port Richmond). We have in James Stuart's "Three Years in America" a description of the ferry of those days with the bar and lunch counter and personality of the all-important captain. Presently competition in speed arose and in 1838 the Mirror records contests between the "Samson" and the "Wave" with deliberate collision in the bay as a means of winning the race. There were many changes in ownership on both east and north shore before 1884, and the names of many steamboats might be recalled as well as incidents like the explosion of the "Westfield" boilers in 1871; the important event, however, came in 1884 when the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railway Company began the present service of boats from St. George with trains from the east and north shore connecting with them. The first train from Clifton to Tompkinsville ran July 31, 1884, and the road was opened as far as Elm Park February 22 or 23, 1886. The next step in the concentration at St. George came when the Municipal Ferry service began October 25, 1905.

In addition to the principal ferries to New York, steam ferries replaced the more primitive service between Bergen Point and Port Richmond, after Coyle's Horse Boat of about 1839, between Holland Hook and Elizabethport, and between Tottenville and Perth Amboy. There have also been at times ferries from New Jersey points to New York, which have made stops at Tottenville, Rossville, Chelsea, Mariners Harbor, Seguin's Dock, etc. Spasmodically, also, boats have run to Staten Island beaches and from Staten Island to Coney Island, direct or via Bay Ridge.

The first steam railroad was projected in 1836 but was not in operation until 1860. Trains ran part of the way April 23 and the formal opening from Clifton to Tottenville took place June 2, 1860. It is still known to many as the "Country Train" from the agricultural character of its route. The rapid transit trains as above stated, were added to the system in 1884 and 1886; and the bridge over the Arthur Kill was opened June 13, 1889. The first passenger train passed over the bridge January 1, 1890. Horse car lines dating

from 1863, along the north and east shore, preceded the rapid transit trains and lines of horse cars or stages were operated to Constanz Brewery, to Richmond, to Linoleumville, etc., as occasion seemed to require. The replacement of the horse car and stage lines by electric car lines will be referred to later.

### *Progress 1860-1884*

Except for its villages and factories, served by steam ferries and railways, Staten Island at the beginning of the War of the Rebellion was still a place of vast interior, and as late as 1880 it had only 38,000 people on an area in excess of 36,000 acres. There were large country residences and farms interrupted by forested hills and swamps, surrounded by salt meadow and a long stretch of sea beach. Some recollections of the charm of the old Staten Island are preserved in the letters of Thoreau, who lived on Emerson Hill in 1843, also in the report of Dr. Samuel Akerly to the State Agricultural Society in 1842 and in the "Days Afield" of William T. Davis.

The War of the Rebellion, being fought at a distance, had less effect on Staten Island than the Revolution. Camp Scott, located at New Dorp, was one feature and riots attending the unpopular drafting of men for the war are recorded. Many Staten Islanders lost their lives and the flags and markers of the Grand Army of the Republic in our cemeteries keep their memory alive. Remembered, also, is the literary work of Sydney Howard Gay, his earnest support of Lincoln, and that of those who were in sympathy with the cause he espoused.

The first directory of Staten Island was published during the war and shows some statistics worth repeating. There were in 1862 fourteen volunteer fire companies, Cataract engine dating from 1844, the others from 1853 to 1862. There were thirty churches, including three Roman Catholic (St. Peters, dating from 1839) and two German Lutheran, dating from 1852, when the church on Jewett Avenue was bought from the Methodists. There were places of amusement at Biddle's Grove, Clifton Park, Silver Lake, Constanz Brewery and a race course at New Dorp. That these were already bringing us disorderly Sunday crowds is shown by the reminiscences of a ferrymaster of the same date.

Some of the happenings between 1860 and 1884 were the establishment in 1861 of the S. R. Smith Infirmary, now the



Staten Island Hospital; the coming of the horse car in 1863, and the incorporation of the villages of Port Richmond, New Brighton and Edgewater in 1866, and Tottenville in 1869. In 1870 Police Commissioners succeeded former police control and in 1871 the Village Hall at New Brighton was built.

The Staten Island Water Supply Company, incorporated in 1879, began to furnish water on August 15, 1881, and the Crystal Water Company commenced business in 1883, while the plants at New Dorp and Tottenville came later. All of these plants have since been replaced by the Catskill Water Supply.

The coming of the water distributing systems were followed shortly by sewers. The flush tank system was first specified in the Crystal Water Company's contract dated May 4, 1886.

Before entering on the last chapter of Staten Island's history mention should be made of its newspapers which date from 1827; of the beginning of public schools in 1843 (which year also is memorable for the Housman murders at Fayetteville, now Graniteville), and of the many famous men and women who have lived here<sup>6</sup>.

### *Industrial Development*

As has already been stated, there were no important industries, except farming and fishing, on Staten Island until 1819. In that year the dyeing business was established at Factoryville and before 1860 the following factories began their operations:

Joseph Hall established a gun factory about 1833 between Franklin and Lafayette Avenues, memory of which is preserved in the name of the "Cottages", but about 1835, his factory was removed to Willow Brook to give a name there to the Gun Factory Road.

The New York India Rubber Cloth Company came to Factoryville in 1835; its extensive buildings on Broadway were afterwards used for making wallpaper and gave rise to the block cutting industry there, which still exists.

The Jewett White Lead Works in Port Richmond date from 1842.

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(6) See Bayles' History, p. 628-640, also the annual report of Borough President Calvin D. Van Name in 1921.

The Crabtree and Wilkenson factory on Jersey Street, known as Irving's Factory since about 1881, was started about 1844 by silk dyers and printers from Lincolnshire, England. By the recorded deeds Wilkenson seems to have joined Crabtree in 1848. Their product was silk bandannas, which were also made at Factoryville, and worn by colored mammies.

Barrett Nephews & Company's Dyeing Establishment on Cherry Lane started in 1851. It was locally known as the Colonel's factory and prospered. In 1895, it was consolidated with the old Dyeing establishment and the Cherry Lane plant was abandoned.

Thomas Lawrence had a distillery at New Brighton before 1815 but it was 1851 before the brewing industry became important. The Italian liberator, Garibaldi, who lived on Staten Island two years and in whose memory his cottage is preserved, and his partner Meucci established in 1851 what was later Bachmann's Brewery. The Constanz started in 1852, Bechtels in 1853, Bischoff's in 1854. Rubsam & Hormann came later in 1870.

De Jonge's Paper Factory started in Tompkinsville in 1852 where it remained until its recent removal to Clifton. In S. C. Judson's Sketch Book this date is given as 1846.

B. Kreischer & Son started the manufacture of fire brick, etc., between Rossville and Tottenville in 1854. The small village resulting is sometimes called Kreischer-ville, sometimes Charleston. The Kreischer Works date from 1845 but were at first in New York. They left New York entirely in 1876, were burned and rebuilt in 1877.

Richmond County Gas Light Company (now the New York & Richmond Gas Company) was organized in 1856 and began the manufacture and distribution of artificial gas in 1858.

Other industries flourished on Staten Island before the War of the Rebellion, but exact dates are not available. Brickyards existed along the Fresh Kill and at Elm Park. Shipbuilding prospered with the oyster trade which needed many boats. Reed's Basket Willow Swamp still survives as a reminder of another industry. There were tanneries at more



than one place. Trap rock quarries sent paving blocks to far off cities and gave a putative name to Graniteville. Among the past industries of Staten Island was iron mining which ceased about 1882. Louis P. Gratacap in his "Geology of New York City" states that 300,000 tons were yielded by our mines, partly for blast furnaces elsewhere, partly to produce red ochre paint. In 1832 Walter Dongan conveyed to Warmaldus Cooper the right to take iron ore and other minerals. The mine last worked was on Jewett Avenue, Port Richmond; others were on Todt Hill (which the Dutch called Yserberg), on Ocean Terrace and on the Serpentine Road. For a short time, about 1876, so called asbestos was also mined on Staten Island. About 80 tons were taken from Pavilion Hill.

After the War of the Rebellion came additional factory enterprises, which included Dental Works, 1865, Dean Linseed Oil Mill, 1869, American Docks, 1872, American Linoleum Company, 1873, Plaster Mills, 1877, C. W. Hunt Company after 1882. By 1897 the directory shows the addition of manufacturers of ships, varnish, fireworks, flour, silk labels, ultramarine, etc. The World War brought an enormous expansion of the shipbuilding industry and the demand for homes on Staten Island during and after the war brought factories for building materials. At the present time there are over one hundred and fifty manufacturing enterprises employing approximately 15,000 people.

### *Electric Development*

Since 1884 the development of Staten Island has been rapid, its population having increased from about 40,000 to 126,000 gaining 30% or better each decade. Two important factors are visible, one the consolidation in Greater New York with improved transportation, schools, water supply, roads, police and fire service, with which all are familiar; the other, the extraordinary progress of the last forty years in the use of electricity. Staten Island had telegraph wires carrying its messages before the War of the Rebellion; it had the beginning of telephone service in 1882; and about 1884, it began to play an important part in the early development of central station electric service. About this time Erastus Wiman had organized The Staten Island Rapid Transit Railway Company with a ferry at St. George and had planned the present Livingston power station, which

was not completed beyond the foundation and building walls until some years later. The railroad was completed to Erastina in 1886, where Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was the attraction, while at St. George the Metropolitan Baseball Club, a Lacrosse team from Canada, and an illuminated fountain were provided to draw crowds of people to Staten Island<sup>7</sup>. In connection with these attractions a power station located near the corner of Richmond Terrace and South Street, was placed in operation during the summer of 1886. The equipment consisted of two engine-driven generators with a combined capacity of approximately 100 H.P. The Edison Electric Illuminating Company in May 1887, purchased this power station and made a bid for village lighting. There were a number of other small companies organized between 1884 and 1896 for the purpose of furnishing electric lighting service to various portions of the island, particularly in the villages of Edgewater, Port Richmond and New Brighton.

On January 13, 1897, the New York & Staten Island Electric Company was incorporated and effected a consolidation of all of the several electric companies operating at that time. Immediately following this consolidation, service was extended to those portions of the island not previously served electrically. The New York and Staten Island Electric Company continued to be the only operating electric company until August 16, 1902, when the Richmond Light Company acquired all of its business and property. On August 18, of the same year, the Richmond Light Company changed its corporate name to the Richmond Light and Railroad Company and two days later purchased the electric railway property of the Staten Island Electric Railroad Company.

By deed dated July 31, 1923, The Staten Island Edison Corporation purchased from the Richmond Light and Railroad Company, all of its electric business, property and franchises. To meet the demands for electric light and power service brought about by the rapid industrial developments and home building, the new Company immediately began work on plans for extensive improvements at the Livingston power station and the construction of additional substations and transmission lines. Many of the improvements provided for

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(7) In the summer of 1888 a feature attraction, Kiralfy's "Nero or the Fall of Rome" was introduced. The elephants used in this attraction, were stabled on Jersey Street and driven to St. George past the house on St. Mark's Place of Harper's cartoonist, William A. Rogers, whose life studies from these pachyderms contributed to American history the G. O. P. Elephant.





*Photo by P. L. Sperr 1924*

#### AMBROSE CHANNEL LIGHT

On Meissner Hill at Richmond—Its light guides vessels entering the lower bay.

in the initial program have since been completed and all incomplete work is being carried out as rapidly as conditions will permit.

Any story, no matter how short, relating to the electric development on Staten Island would not be complete without showing, in some manner, the growth of the business over a period of years. The following is a tabulation of the metered connections and the kilowatt hour output at five year intervals from 1908 to 1923 and for the twelve months ended June 30, 1924, from which can be gained an idea of the strides this industry has made during the past seventeen years:

Twelve Months	Metered Connections	Kilowatt Hour Output
1908	2091	12,650,357
1913	4887	13,413,660
1918	9072	36,032,581
1923	25357	44,359,000
7-1-23/6-30-24	27402	52,476,000

In the wake of the introduction of electric energy for street and house lighting came the electric street car, which speedily replaced the horse car.

The Prohibition Park Electric Railway Company operated the first electric car on Staten Island over a line on Jewett Avenue from Port Richmond to Prohibition Park on July 4, 1892. This road was taken over later by the Staten Island Midland Electric Railroad Company.

The Staten Island Midland Electric Railroad Company ran its first electric car between Port Richmond and Richmond on July 25, 1896. The Manor Road line originally operated with horse cars, was electrified in 1896, as was also the Bulls Head line, as far as Blackford Avenue. Service on the Silver Lake line was established in the summer of 1896 and on the Castleton Avenue line later in the following year. The operation of this property was taken over by the City of New York, Department of Plant and Structures, on November 5, 1920.

The Staten Island Electric Railroad Company ran its first electric car on December 22, 1895, from St. George via Tompkinsville, Brook Street, Jersey Street and Richmond Terrace to Bodine Creek, over tracks previously operated as



a horse car line by the Staten Island Belt Line Railroad Company. The tracks were extended to Holland Hook and a through service established on July 4, 1896, which marks the date of the opening of a scheduled ferry service between Holland Hook and Elizabeth by the New Jersey and Staten Island Ferry Company. Service on the south shore as far as Clifton was started on December 25, 1895, and late in the summer of 1896 was extended to South Beach by way of Fort Wadsworth. The construction of tracks on Richmond Terrace from St. George to Jersey Street was completed during the summer of 1896. This property was purchased by the Richmond Light and Railroad Company August 20, 1902, the present operating company.

The Southfield Beach Railroad was first operated as a horse car line from South Beach to a place known as Foley's Grove (Crabtree Station). This line was extended to Midland Beach, its present terminus, and electrified during the summer of 1902.

### *Staten Island During the World War*

From April 6, 1917 to November 10, 1918, Staten Island, under able leadership, gave itself completely to doing its part in winning the war. In the sale of Liberty Bonds, it went repeatedly over the top, in its shipbuilding facilities it was foremost, in its Red Cross activities, its women showed what they could do. Over 5000 men went to the front and the Borough Hall Tablet and Hero Park are sacred to the memory of the 126 who gave their lives. The names of those who were foremost in the work will recur to the reader's mind; the complete list of helpful men and women would include all Staten Island.

### *After the War*

The developments of Staten Island in recent years need not be recited at length. The operation of the Department of Plant and Structures culminating in four trackless trolley lines; the construction of piers on the east shore; the Seaview Hospital; and the sinking of the tunnel shaft at St. George, are well known to all.

The table of statistics appended shows some features of 1924 Staten Island, already grown into an important community and equipped by nature, municipal and private enterprises for a further and rapid growth in the future.

## APPENDIX

### STATISTICS OF STATEN ISLAND

DIMENSIONS—	Length 13.9 miles, width 7.3 miles at widest part; area 57.154 square miles or 36,600 acres.
ELEVATION—	413 feet above sea level at highest point (the highest point between Maine and Florida).
WATER FRONT—	35.4 miles of which 21.2 miles is on deep water. The water front on the Fresh Kills is not included.
POPULATION—	116,531 in 1920; estimated at over 126,000 in 1924.
TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES—	6 ferry systems to New York, Brooklyn, Bergen Point, Elizabeth, Carteret and Perth Amboy, carrying 26,000,000 passengers in 1922; 23.5 miles of steam railroad; 36 miles of street railways; 17.46 miles of trolley bus lines; freight terminal of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, transporting 4,000,000 tons of freight across the island annually; 23 docks and piers, including 12 municipal piers, each over a thousand feet long and covering 44 acres; 355.75 miles of streets and highways.
MUNICIPAL PROTECTION—	Police force of 200 men, 15 detectives; Fire Department of 17 paid and 10 volunteer companies.
WATER SUPPLY—	300 miles of mains; 3200 hydrants, 22,500 accounts, 18,-000,000 gallons of water used daily.
SEWERS—	113 miles.
ELECTRIC UTILITY—	Generating capacity 25,000 KW., output 52,476,000 KWH (12 months ending June 30, 1924); 27,402 metered connections.
GAS UTILITY—	Plant capacity (24 hours) 3,500,000 cu. ft.; miles of mains 148.9, send out 779,273,700 cu. ft. (12 months ending June 30, 1924); 22,863 customers.
TELEPHONES—	15,484 with 60,000 daily calls.
BANKS—	11 with resources of \$19,300,000. <small>(excluding Corn Exchange Bank, Staten Island Branch, which with the parent institution and other branches, has deposits of \$200,000,000. and a capital and surplus of \$22,000,000.)</small>
BUILDING LOANS—	18 with assets of \$16,000,000.
INSURANCE—	1 Insurance Company.
BUILDINGS—	About 20,000 in 1921; 2428 added in 1922 and 3041 in 1923.
INDUSTRIES—	150 including 120 employing five or more; employees over 15,000.
SCHOOLS—	68 including private schools and Wagner College.
CHURCHES—	95 including German, Hungarian, Italian, Jewish, Norwegian, and Swedish.

Hospitals 5, Charities 13, Libraries 4, Civic Societies and Clubs 60, Theatres 14. A museum where maps, books, pictures and specimens of natural products may be seen.





LIVINGSTON POWER STATION  
Staten Island Edison Corporation